

Transactions

JUNE/JULY 2008

TRANSPORTATION NEWS
FOR THE NINE-COUNTY
SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA



Photo Key

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9

West Approach Photo Gallery

- 1** One of the Bay Bridge towers peeks out between a San Francisco high rise and the iconic clocktower, serving as a beacon for drivers headed to the East Bay.
- 2** Work continues on the new curved Harrison Street off-ramp, shown here.
- 3** Caltrans Resident Engineer Deanna Vilcheck fields questions from the media at the opening event.
- 4** Workers pose on the newly surfaced eastbound deck.
- 5** In a nod to the chain cutting that opened the Bay Bridge back in 1936, Governor Schwarzenegger severs a ceremonial chain with a torch. Just to the left are Jack Frost, chief operations officer for Tutor-Saliba Corporation (the general contractor), San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom and Dennis Turchon, Caltrans principal construction manager.
- 6** The West Approach project runs along the Interstate 80 corridor from the San Francisco anchorage (at Beale Street) to 5th Street.
- 7** Caltrans Director Will Kempton makes a point while standing in front of a rendering of a related seismic project: the new East Span of the Bay Bridge.
- 8 & 9** Workers put finishing touches on the new roadway.

West Approach Up Close

It may not boast dramatic features, but the new West Approach to the Bay Bridge mirrors some of the historic architectural details in the original structure, and is a work of art in its own right. The elevated structure represents a triumph of engineering and construction know-how over a challenging setting, with multistory homes and offices just feet from the heavy machinery and workers.

Originally, the West Approach had an upper deck (westbound) and lower deck (eastbound) configuration for much of its course through San Francisco, with one foundation system supporting both decks. Each deck now has an independent column and foundation support system and the roadways run essentially side by side for a greater distance rather than on top of each other. The project is a retrofit by replacement, with Caltrans building temporary structures to keep traffic moving while the permanent structures have been dismantled and rebuilt.

While the project was declared substantially complete when the permanent eastbound deck opened in April 2008, work will continue over the next several months as the temporary structure that carried eastbound traffic is removed, the permanent decks are widened to provide a full shoulder in each direction, the Harrison Street off-ramp is completed and retrofit work continues from Harrison to the San Francisco anchorage.



CENTER PHOTO WITH THE GOVERNOR BY KARL NIELSEN; ALL OTHERS BY JOHN HUSEBY, CALTRANS DISTRICT 4.

Region Celebrates Official Opening of West Approach to Bay Bridge

COMPLEX SEISMIC SAFETY PROJECT DELIVERED SEVEN MONTHS EARLY

There was plenty to smile about at the spring event to celebrate the earlier-than-expected official opening of the Bay Bridge's new West Approach, a one-mile elevated stretch of Interstate 80 coursing through San Francisco's densely developed South of Market residential and commercial area. And smiles abounded, with neighbors and construction workers posing together for photos while enjoying a down-home barbecue lunch.



While the block party was getting under way at the street level, officials gathered on the elevated roadway deck to mark what Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, the keynote speaker, termed "mind-boggling construction and engineering feats."

"The Bay Bridge is an economic and transportation colossus and we are rebuilding it to make it seismically safe for generations to come," Schwarzenegger said. "I could not be more proud of

the incredible workers who are making the West Approach of the bridge a reality, a full seven months ahead of schedule."

San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom noted the project was completed without the "stress and consternation" one might expect, given that it took place in what essentially was the neighbors' front yard.

The seismic safety work on the West Approach has been, in Caltrans Director Will Kempton's words, "the most complex staging job that this department has ever

accomplished." The five-year effort has involved completely removing and replacing the freeway in its original footprint as well as replacing all on- and off-ramps. Kempton compared the project to "changing a tire on a car that's moving at 65 miles per hour."

The West Approach is one of several monumental seismic projects funded by MTC's Bay Area Toll Authority, which has been working hand in hand with Caltrans and the California Transportation Commission to deliver the projects on time and on budget. — Paisley Strellis

Spare the Air New Campaign Calls for Making Clean Air Choices Every Day

The Bay Area's Spare the Air campaign is morphing from a summer smog prevention tool into a more comprehensive program focused on combating climate change year-round. A primary focus will be on the transportation sector, which is responsible for 50 percent of the greenhouse gases and smog-forming compounds emitted in the Bay Area.

Instead of offering several free transit days this summer, MTC and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District will sponsor one free transit day for the public — on Thursday, June 19, 2008 — at a cost of \$1.8 million. This date coincides with the "Dump the Pump Day" sponsored by the American Public Transit Association.

By designating a specific free-

transit day ahead of time instead of reacting to smog advisories, the agencies hope to give commuters ample time to plan their day and plot their transit routes.

MTC and the Air District will direct the remainder of the Spare the Air funding available in 2008 to incentives and outreach for a broader, climate-oriented campaign.

Continued on back page



Calendar

Unless indicated otherwise, all meetings take place at: Metropolitan Transportation Commission Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter Lawrence D. Dahms Auditorium 101 Eighth Street, Oakland (Across from the Lake Merritt BART station)

THURSDAY
JUNE 19, 2008

9:30 am
Regional Pedestrian Committee
MetroCenter, Claremont Conference Room

1 pm
Regional Bicycle Working Group
MetroCenter, Claremont Conference Room

WEDNESDAY
JUNE 25, 2008

10 am
Bay Area Toll Authority*

10:05 am
Service Authority for Freeways and Expressways*

10:10 am
Metropolitan Transportation Commission*

FRIDAY
JUNE 27, 2008

9:30 am
Regional Airport Planning Committee

1 pm
Bay Area Partnership Board*

THURSDAY
JULY 3, 2008

10:30 am
Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee

TUESDAY
JULY 8, 2008

3:15 pm
Minority Citizens Advisory Committee

WEDNESDAY
JULY 9, 2008

9:30 am
Bay Area Toll Authority Oversight Committee*

9:45 am
Administration Committee*

10:15 am
Programming and Allocations Committee*

12:30 pm
MTC Advisory Council

FRIDAY
JULY 11, 2008

9 am
Planning Committee*

9:45 am
Operations Committee*

10 am
Legislation Committee*

FRIDAY
JULY 18, 2008

10 am
Association of Bay Area Governments/
Bay Area Air Quality Management District/
Bay Conservation and Development
Commission/Metropolitan Transportation
Commission Joint Policy Committee*

WEDNESDAY
JULY 23, 2008

10 am
Bay Area Toll Authority*

10:05 am
Metropolitan Transportation Commission*

*Webcast on <www.mtc.ca.gov>.

Note: Dates, times and locations of MTC meetings may change. Please confirm by calling 510.817.5757. Agendas, updated meeting schedules and meeting packets are posted on MTC's Web site: <www.mtc.ca.gov>.

Online Survey

TRANSPORTATION
2035
CHANGE IN MOTION

Can You Spend \$30 Billion
In 10 Minutes?

That's how long it will take you to fill out the online survey for the current phase of the Transportation 2035 planning process. Test your grasp of transportation facts, and tell MTC planners and policymakers how you would divvy up the \$30 billion in discretionary funding expected to flow to the Bay Area over the next 25 years for transportation programs and projects. Maintaining our existing network? Congestion relief? Emissions reductions? Strategic expansions? Log on to <www.mtc.ca.gov/T2035>, and tell us your priorities by Friday, June 27, 2008.



Photo Album

Numbers Surge for Bike to Work Day 2008

Spurred on by skyrocketing gas prices, concerns about global warming and the fact that it was also an official “Spare the Air” day, a record number of cyclists turned out for Bike to Work Day on May 15, 2008.

Volunteers staffing the 220-plus Bike to Work Day Energizer Stations around the region — where participants

could refuel with drinks and snacks, and pick up giveaways — counted close to 115,000 cyclists who either stopped by or whizzed by during the morning commute period, a significant increase from prior years.

“And if we factor in the untold number of people who pedaled to work on May 15 but didn’t pass by an Energizer Station, we can estimate that participation could have been in the 140,000 to 150,000 range,” said Cole Portocarrero, executive director of the Bay Area Bicycle Coal-

ition (BABC), which coordinated the event with major sponsorship by MTC.

For some residents, Bike to Work Day punctuated a month-long bicycling marathon known as Team Bike Challenge, also sponsored by MTC and BABC. Friends and coworkers formed more than 400 teams who bicycled to and from work and errands throughout May in an effort to log the most points.

— Brenda Kahn

See the Team Bike Challenge results at <bayareabikes.org/btwd>.

Facts & Figures Bay Area Freeway Congestion Rises Overall as Traffic Eases Along Key Corridors



Top 10 Bay Area Traffic Hot Spots				
Ranking of Commute-Period Bottlenecks Along Freeways, 2007				
(Number 1 indicates the most congested freeway)				
2007 Rank	Location (numbers correspond to map)	Daily (Weekday) Vehicle Hours of Delay		2006 Rank
		2007	2006	
1	Interstate 80, westbound, a.m. — Alameda/Contra Costa County Route 4 to Bay Bridge metering lights	11,100	12,230	1
2	Interstate 580, eastbound, p.m. — Alameda County Interstate 680 to Greenville Road	7,410	6,720	2
3	U.S. 101, southbound, a.m. — Marin County Rowland Boulevard to Interstate 580	6,490	5,020	4
4	Interstate 580, westbound, a.m. — Alameda County Interstate 205 to Hacienda Drive	5,120	5,320	3
5	U.S. 101, northbound and Interstate 80, eastbound, p.m. — San Francisco County, U.S. 101 from Alemany Boulevard to Interstate 80; Interstate 80 from U.S. 101 to Sterling Street on-ramp	4,760	4,880	5
6	Route 4, westbound, a.m. — Contra Costa County A Street/Lone Tree Way to Route 242	4,750	2,990	9
7	Route 92, eastbound, p.m. — Alameda County Industrial Boulevard to Interstate 880 interchange	3,930	3,880	6
8	Interstate 880, southbound, a.m. — Alameda County Marina Boulevard to south of Industrial Parkway	3,790	1,550	26
9	Interstate 80, eastbound, p.m. — San Francisco/Alameda County Bryant St./5th St. in San Francisco to east of Powell St. in Emeryville	3,530	3,030	8
10	U.S. 101, southbound, p.m. — Santa Clara County Great America Parkway to North 13th Street/Oakland Road	3,210	2,430	14

Notes: Rankings are for routes in which continuous stop-and-go conditions occur with few, if any, breaks in the queue. Thus, corridors that have equally severe delays, but where congestion is broken into several segments, may rank lower in this type of congestion listing. Congestion is defined as average speeds below 35 miles per hour for 15 minutes or more. Source: MTC, Caltrans District 4.

Traffic Up 12 Percent in 2007

Traffic delays along several of the Bay Area’s most congested freeway corridors declined in 2007 — even as the region saw overall traffic reach its highest level since 2000.

The region experienced 161,700 vehicle hours of delay during commute periods on an average weekday during 2007, a 12 percent increase over 2006 and second only to the 177,600 hours recorded in

2000, at the height of the dot-com boom. The increase in 2007 marks the fourth year in a row that traffic levels have been on an upswing as a byproduct of an expanding economy. Last year’s uptick also can be attributed to a more robust data collection effort by MTC and Caltrans, which jointly released the new data.

“We recorded congestion in one year that likely had been building up over sev-

eral years,” said Caltrans District 4 Director and MTC Commissioner Bijan Sartipi. Although Interstate 80 from Hercules to the Bay Bridge once again topped the list of the region’s most congested freeway locations, delay along the corridor fell 9 percent in 2007 compared to 2006, thanks in part to the new FasTrak® configuration at the Bay Bridge toll plaza, and a rising number of FasTrak® users.

The worst of the Bay Area’s congestion tends to be concentrated in a few familiar places, with eight of the top 10 regional hot spots showing up on the 2006 list as well. Congestion levels in 2008 may drop due to \$4-plus per gallon gasoline and a weak real estate market.

— Joe Curley and John Goodwin

For more details, go to “Press Releases” under <www.mtc.ca.gov/news>.

Spare the Air

Continued from front page

“The state set very aggressive targets for greenhouse gas reductions when Assembly Bill 32 was signed into law in 2006,” explained Air District Executive Officer Jack Broadbent. “One of the most effective ways we can help protect our climate is to make clean air choices every day” in order to reduce the region’s carbon footprint. In keeping with the new year-round thrust, the retooled Spare the Air logo emphasizes the four seasons.

On June 19, transit generally will be free all day on Bay Area buses and light-rail lines, and free until noon on BART, Caltrain, Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) and Capitol Corridor trains as well as on Bay Area ferries.

Although that will be the only regionwide free transit day, the Air District and MTC will continue to urge the public to avoid driving on smoggy days when a Spare the Air advisory is issued. The 2008 smog season got off to an early start when the Air District issued two back-to-back Spare the Air advisories for May 15 and May 16.

To receive e-mail notification of Spare the Air advisories, sign up for AirAlerts at <www.sparetheair.org>. To plan your transit trips, visit <511.org> and click on the “Transit” tab.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION WWW.MTC.CA.GOV

Commissioners

- Bill Dodd, Chair
Napa County and Cities
- Scott Haggerty, Vice Chair
Alameda County
- Tom Ammiano
City and County of San Francisco
- Tom Azumbrado
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Tom Bates
Cities of Alameda County
- Bob Blanchard
Sonoma County and Cities
- Dean J. Chu
Cities of Santa Clara County
- Dave Cortese
Association of Bay Area Governments
- Dorene M. Giacomini
U.S. Department of Transportation
- Federal D. Glover
Contra Costa County
- Anne W. Halsted
San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission
- Steve Kinsey
Marin County and Cities
- Sue Lempert
Cities of San Mateo County
- Jon Rubin
San Francisco Mayor’s Appointee
- Bijan Sartipi
State Business, Transportation and Housing Agency
- James P. Spering
Solano County and Cities
- Adrienne J. Tissier
San Mateo County
- Amy Worth
Cities of Contra Costa County
- Ken Yeager
Santa Clara County

Transactions

JUNE/JULY 2008

Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter
101 Eighth Street
Oakland, California 94607

510.817.5700 TEL.
510.817.5769 TDD/TTY
510.817.5848 FAX
info@mtc.ca.gov E-MAIL
www.mtc.ca.gov WEB

- Steve Heminger
Executive Director
- Ann Flemer
Deputy Executive Director, Operations
- Andrew B. Fremier
Deputy Executive Director, Bay Area Toll Authority
- Therese W. McMillan
Deputy Executive Director, Policy
- Randy Rentschler
Director, Legislation and Public Affairs
- Brenda Kahn
Editor
- Joe Curley
Associate Editor
- Karin Betts, John Goodwin, Georgia Lambert, Paisley Strellis
Editorial Staff
- Finger Design Associates, Oakland
Design and Production
- Paris Printing, Point Richmond
Printing
- Printed on recycled paper.
- ©2008 MTC. All rights reserved.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

PRESORT
FIRST CLASS
U.S. Postage
PAID
Oakland, CA
Permit No. 854